

Post-pandemic travel: The trends we'll see when the world opens up again

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13 Apr 2021

It's been a while since the question "where should I travel to next?" has felt within reach.



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Covid-19 continues to affect travel by forcing governments to impose country-specific [bans and restrictions](#). However, as [vaccination programmes](#) roll out, many of us hope to travel again at some point in the near future, even if not immediately. With that in mind, what are the factors that will shape our travel decisions in a post-pandemic era?

Post-Covid tourism

Although significant restrictions are still in place, travel agency adverts have become more frequent recently. According to [reports](#), holiday bookings have once again begun to soar as people look beyond lockdowns.

Covid-19-related travel conditions will complicate holidays for the foreseeable future – including potential measures like requiring people to be [vaccinated](#). The fear is that this will limit foreign travel options for those who haven't received the vaccine. It [may even](#) affect people's ability to travel domestically. Economic issues will also affect travel globally, since so many people have [lost income](#) during the pandemic.

These challenges will shape our decisions when it comes to choosing a holiday. By the time the pandemic ends, the days of choosing holidays based on destination or attractions will be over. Instead, the industry and travellers alike will be much more concerned with personal needs.



Post-COVID tourism is expected to focus more on people, as opposed to destinations. [David Tadevosian/Shutterstock](#)

Faced with the desire to travel and practical obstacles against it, people are expected to make more considered travel choices. Tourists in the post-Covid era will be less willing to compromise on their next trip. They will have much higher expectations of hospitality service providers and be much more demanding. In order to keep up, the industry should prioritise offering services, facilities and experiences that cater to wellness, health, and overall wellbeing. They will need to focus on high hygiene standards, which tourists are expected to covet.

It won't be surprising to see trends like health tourism, [wellness tourism](#), spiritual and potentially religious tourism rising in popularity too. Thanks to the pandemic, tourists are paying more attention than ever to these needs whether they're urgent health concerns, luxury treatments, or the pursuit of [physical, intellectual and spiritual wellness](#) after over a year of living with restrictions.

Human-oriented tourism

According to tourism academic Fabio Carbone, post-COVID tourism is also [expected to focus more on people](#) than destinations. Those eager to get away from measures like social distancing will likely use travel to embrace existing relationships with loved ones living abroad or seek new encounters. Carbone suggests that because of this, post-Covid tourism will pivot towards prioritising human development, dialogue, and peace.

Popular types of tourism are therefore likely to include: travel for visiting friends and relatives, volunteer tourism, and peace

tourism.

Volunteer tourism – or voluntourism – is a niche tourist activity which essentially means volunteering in a foreign destination. Although some [question](#) whether it positively contributes to developing countries and underprivileged communities, voluntourism has generated valuable humanitarian work. With economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic having hit developing countries [more severely](#), effective voluntourism isn't only desired, it's necessary.

Read more: [Dark tourism memorial sites will help us heal from the trauma of coronavirus](#)

[Peace tourism](#), on the other hand, refers to an interest in visiting specific destinations in order to either examine how peace is developed and celebrated there through research or studies, or contribute to a destination's efforts to establish peace after conflict. Peace tourism typically involves visiting peace memorials or conflict zones with the aim of learning from the mistakes of past wars and helping to resolve or prevent existing conflict.

Examples of peace tourism activities include educational field trips to sites such as the [Berlin Wall Memorial](#) and the [Hiroshima Peace Park](#). It might also take the form of attending [workshops](#) and [conferences](#) among conflict resolution professionals or going on guided [peace walks](#) that delve into histories of achieving or searching for peace. Visiting [famous peace artworks](#) and [peace-themed exhibitions](#), as well as [festivals and performances](#) are also considered peace tourism activities.

The tourism industry has a unique opportunity to reflect on its future. If it wants to make an impact, it needs to prioritise providing quality, affordable experiences and putting customers first. Whenever travel resumes in the post-pandemic world, promoting specific destinations and landmarks will no longer make sense. It may be difficult in the face of restrictive and ever-changing travel corridors, but the travel industry has little choice but to remodel holidays around catering to our wants and desires.

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